### SUSPENSE

and stopped the opponents' long ball to preserve the win.
"I just wanted us to hold on," UNC

reserve point guard Terrence Newby said. "That's the type of games that happen this time of year."

Newby couldn't be more right. Including the Tar Heels' wins against Tulsa and Tennessee, 21 of this year's NCAA Tournament games have been

NCAA Tournament games have been decided by five points or less, including

While that might be good for CBS, Tar Heel center Brendan Haywood said he could do without the type of drama the past few UNC wins have had.

"I'd love to be up like 30 points, sitting on the bench and cheering on the Blue team." Haywood said. "But we'll

Blue team," Haywood said. "But we'll take it how we can get it."

### **Tournament Notes**

■ Cota, Forte and Jason Capel were named to the South Region All-Tournament team, with Forte taking the honor of Most Outstanding Player. The trio was joined by Tulsa's Eric Coley and Brandon Kurtz.

■ UNC's win against Tulsa gave Guthridge a career record of 80-27, tying him with N.C. State's Everett Case for the most wins by a collegiate coach in his first three seasons. Case compiled an 80-16 mark in his first three cam-■ The first thing Lang did after the

Tar Heels' initial celebration on the floor was locate his mom, Kyle Merrill, in the crowd and blow her a kiss.

'This is the first true vacation she's had," Lang said.
And the vacation isn't over for

"I said, 'Ready to go to Indy?'" Lang said. "And she said, 'I already packed



North Carolina Jason Capel jumps into the arms of Kris Lang to celebrate UNC's victory against Tulsa and berth in the Final Four.

■ Tulsa's 55 points was its lowest output of the season. The Golden Hurricane was averaging 81.1 points per game, but it shot 37.3 percent against UNC.

The Tar Heels used a mixture of zone

and man-to-man to keep Tulsa off-balance in what Guthridge called "our best defensive game of the year.

■ The four-point margin of defeat was the largest Tulsa suffered all season. Sunday's win gave the Tar Heels a ur-game winning streak, their longest

The Sports Editor can be reached at sports@unc.edu.

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

Coley, who fouled out with six points. "Maybe we should have focused on their guards. We were all over him, and

(Forte) still made shots."
Forte was 10-of-17 from the floor, and that included a 1-of-7 effort from 3-point range. He tied Haywood for the team lead with eight rebounds. He was 7-of-

8 from the foul line, the final free throw clinching the game with 4.1 seconds left. "This is definitely my best game because of the points, the shot selection,

the rebounds and the win," Forte said.
The win was the hardest part. The
Golden Hurricane (32-5) did not make
UNC's improbable run to its 15th Final Four, its third in four years and its sixth

The first half featured five ties and six lead changes as the two teams battled each other for every inch. The play on the post was particularly brutal with four players, three Tulsa players and Haywood, having at least two fouls.

For the first 10 minutes of the second half it got no easier, as the game stood tied at 41 with 9:01 to play. But just as UNC did in Friday's contest with Tennessee, the Tar Heels (22-13) found

a way late in the game.

Against the Vols, UNC went on a 12-5 run in the final three minutes to turn a two-point deficit into a 74-69 victory

Sunday, the run came earlier. UNC reeled off 10 consecutive points, putting the Golden Hurricane in its largest hole of the season. After a Haywood dunk with 2:15 left, the lead stood at nine.

Game over, right? Somebody forgot to tell Tulsa, a team making its first-ever Elite Eight appearance. A jumper by Marcus Hill closed the lead to seven, and then the Tar Heels turned the ball over on three consecutive possessions, twice by point guard Ed Cota. UNC 59, Tulsa 55

"Ed was completely worn out there at the end," UNC coach Bill Guthridge said. "They were able to take advantage

of that. We didn't lose our poise."

Forte, who is the team's youngest player and turned 19 on Thursday, knocked in two free throws with 26.5 seconds, but Tulsa guard Dante Swanson

drained a trey to again close it two.

But Cota knocked in a free throw, and then after a missed Tulsa 3-pointer, it was Forte who came to the line with a chance to end it. Forte, who had been 6-of-6 from the line, missed the first.

"I was a little nervous," Haywood said. But not Forte. "I knew I just needed

He drained the second. It might have been the biggest shot by a UNC freshman since a skinny kid

Take Back the Night March

Community and Campus members are invited to join in an annual candlelit march around the UNC-CH campus to reclaim the night and protest sexual violence. The march will take place Thursday, March 30, 2000. All are welcome.

 $7:\!30pm$  - Gather in the UNC pit for music and speakers.  $8:\!00pm$  - March kick off. Speak-out and refreshments to follow.

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named Mike Jordan drilled a 17-foot jumper to win the 1982 national title.

Forte said he memorized Jordan's freshman year averages – 13.5 points, 4.4 rebounds – when comparisons between the two became commonplace.

even though Forte topped Jordan's production as a freshman and still has a chance to match his Final Four heroics, Forte won't make any ridicu lous claims when it comes to Mr.

Jordan, as he calls him.

"I'm no fool," he said. "I'm not Michael Jordan."

For one day at least, Forte played like

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### REACTION

pompoms could be seen waving over

the railings of the upper level. Fans waited almost an hour before the team entered, filling the time with chants of "Whose House? Heels House!" and

"Final For-te." The screaming Woody Durham approached

odium set up in front of the crowd. "Ladies and gentlemen," he announced. "For

TO THE TAXABLE STATE STA

the sixth time in 10 years and the fourth time in the last six years ... there's going to be some light blue in the Final Four!"

The ground shook as fans jumped and screamed when the players walked in,

dressed in suits and white Final Four hats. Durham fought to have his voice heard over the crowd. "About a month ago, I read a column where somebody

said the N.C. on the uniform stood for 'No Chance,'" he said. "Hell, in nine days it could be standing for National Championship!"
Senior Ed Cota was the first of the play-

ers to step to the podium. "You guys "For the sixth time in are the greatest fans ever," he told the 10 years ... there's going to be some light blue crowd to the chants of "Eddie." in the Final Four!"

Freshman Forte, Joseph WOODY DURHAM drawn to the micro-Tar Heels Game Announcer phone by demands echoed

words and summed up the mood of the night. "This is why I came to Carolina."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu

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